

AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY
~ America's Changing, So is the Census ~

Census Questionnaire May be Coming Your Way

The last census occurred in 2000 and at that time every household received either a "short form" questionnaire, which only contained seven basic questions or a "long form" questionnaire, which contained additional questions providing information about the surrounding community.

The long form questions such as how many residents have high school diplomas or college degrees, how many persons speak a language other than English, how long does it take to get to work or how many elderly persons live in the area assist communities and local officials by helping to determine where resources are needed the most. Census data are used in planning where to build roads, schools and senior centers as well as areas needing job training programs.

The American Community Survey, part of the Census Bureau's efforts to streamline and improve the census, will replace the long form questionnaire, which is now sent every 10 years. The American Community Survey will provide communities a vibrant picture *every year* instead of every 10 years.

Approximately one household out of 480 throughout America will receive the questionnaire every month, and will be asked to participate. No household will receive the survey more than once every five years. Responding to the American Community Survey is mandatory, according to title 13 of the United States Code. The same law that requires participation also protects the responses on the questionnaire. Census Bureau employees are sworn to protect the confidentiality of information collected in the survey.

A sample of survey questionnaires are scheduled for mailing within the next few days. A Prenotice Letter will precede the Initial Questionnaire Package with a reminder postcard following the questionnaire a few days later. If the initial questionnaire is not returned after a few weeks a Second Questionnaire Package is mailed to the household. If the second questionnaire is not returned the household will be contacted by telephone, personal visit or both.

The telephone operation is conducted approximately six weeks after the questionnaire is mailed